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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 001511

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SUBJECT: CONTACTS REPORT CONTINUED MONASTERY PROTESTS,
DETENTION OF A TIBETAN SINGER AND TV PERSONALITY

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson.
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Demonstrations and arrests are continuing in Tibetan regions, according to Tibetan poet and blogger Wei Se (aka "Oser", strictly protect). Wei Se told PolOff she had learned of a recent demonstration at Lhasa's Drepung Monastery by monks protesting the lack of adequate food. She claimed her friends and relatives in Lhasa witnessed one deadly shooting and several arrests in connection with the March 14 unrest. Wei Se said she is personally aware of five Tibetans who have been detained, including a well-known singer who works for Qinghai's provincial television station. (Note: This latter case was widely reported in Western media outlets.) Recent price increases in Tibetan areas, she said, contributed to the unrest. Wei Se and her husband, who is also a critic of China's Tibet policy, have received hundreds of angry e-mails. End Summary.

Recent Drepung Monastery Clash

¶2. (C) PolOff spoke April 14 with Tibetan poet Wei Se (strictly protect) (also known as "Oser") and her ethnic Han husband, dissident writer Wang Lixiong (strictly protect). Wei Se told PolOff that her contacts in Tibet are reporting continued protests at monasteries and mass detentions. Monks at Lhasa's Drepung Monastery, according to Wei Se, have been confined within the monastery since March 10 and are not receiving adequate food. The Drepung monks emerged and confronted police around April 11, she said. Wei Se said she had heard that some casualties occurred as a result, though she had no specific details of deaths or injuries.

Deadly Force, Large-Scale Detentions

¶3. (C) Wei Se said a friend in Lhasa witnessed the fatal shooting by security forces of a Tibetan woman just behind the Jokhang Temple March 14. The woman, Wei Se said, was shot just as she was about to throw a rock at police. Authorities collected the body of the woman almost immediately, according to the friend. Wei Se estimates that authorities have detained at least 3,000 people in Lhasa alone. Her mother, who lives in Lhasa, witnessed police beating and arresting four Tibetans March 17. Wei Se said she personally knows five people who are still detained (all names are in Chinese):

--Jiayang Ji (also spelled Jamyang Kyi), a well-known Tibetan singer and producer for Qinghai's provincial television station. Police took Jiayang Ji into custody April 1. Wang Lixiong claimed that police forcibly took a blood sample from Jiayan Ji after she

was taken into custody, but Wang did not know what motivated police to do this. Radio Free Asia and the Associated Press, as well as the New York Times, have since reported this case.

--Gele Basang, a 25-year-old graduate of Tsinghua University, who was detained in Lhasa March 15.

--a graduate of Beijing's Central University for Nationalities (Wei Se did not have the name), who was also arrested in Lhasa March 15.

--Demu Cairang, a 23-year-old NGO worker arrested March 17 in Lhasa.

--Jiumei, a 42-year-old monk at Gansu's Labrang Monastery who was detained in March. Wei Se speculated that this monk's past travel to India, where he met the Dalai Lama, made him a focus of authorities.

Inflation, CCTV Big Factors in Unrest

¶4. (C) Wei Se said that, in addition to long-standing ethnic tensions and repression, Tibetans are angry about rising prices, especially for yak butter, tea, noodles and other daily essentials. Wei Se commented that unrest spread from Lhasa to other regions of Tibet thanks to China's own propaganda. Most Tibetans outside of Lhasa heard about the March 14 riots via China Central Television (CCTV) broadcasts. Watching

BEIJING 00001511 002 OF 002

television reports of the riots prompted many to start their own demonstrations. Most Tibetans do not care about the Olympics, Wei Se claimed, though some leading intellectuals and influential monks see the Olympics as an opportunity to press their cause.

¶5. (C) As a result of their public reputations as prominent intellectuals and critics of Chinese policy toward Tibet, both Wei Se and Wang Lixiong say they have been caught up in recent nationalist fervor. Wei Se said she receive 200 to 300 angry and threatening e-mails perday via her blog (which is blocked in China). Wang Lixiong likewise reported that he isreceiving a daily stream of hate e-mails.
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